

## INFORMATION PAPER

CECW-EP  
9 April 1997

SUBJECT: Dam Safety Program

1. Purpose of the Dam Safety Program: The purpose of the program is to reduce the risks to life and property from dam failure through the establishment and maintenance of an effective program for achieving dam safety hazard reduction.
2. Scope of Commander's Responsibility: The Dam Safety Program encompasses the full range of the Commander's responsibilities for dams. It includes the responsibility for the design, construction, operations, maintenance, and regulation of dams. Responsibility for design and construction continues as long as the dam is in place. Responsibility for operations and maintenance continues as long as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is the owner and operator of the dam.
3. Program Management: In February 1980, the Chief of Engineers appointed the Chief, Engineering Division, Directorate of Civil Works, as the HQUSACE Dam Safety Officer (DSO). The DSO chairs a standing committee which is comprised of technical experts on the safety of dam. The Corps' DSO is also the Secretary of Defense's representative on the Interagency Committee of Dam Safety. At the MSC level, the Director of Engineering and Technical Services is the MSC DSO. At the District level, the Chief, Engineering Division, typically, serves as the District DSO; however, this function may be regionalized by assigning DSO responsibilities to the Chief, Engineering Division in a sister district.
4. Program Oversight: The HQUSACE Dam Safety Committee exercises program oversight of the MSC and District programs through periodic Dam Safety Committee Inspection Visits. These visits are scheduled every two to three years and include a presentation by the MSC DSO plus each District DSO. During a visit, one or more operating dams are visited to review the state of operator training and preparedness. Program oversight also includes the approval of District decision documents for Dam Safety modifications to completed structures.
5. Division Program: The MSC DSO manages the MSC wide program which includes prioritization of dam safety work for budgetary submissions; review and quality assurance of dam design, construction, operations, and maintenance programs; review of periodic dam inspections; and testing of dam safety preparedness during dam safety exercises.
6. District Program Execution: The District DSO executes the Dam Safety Program during all stages of project development, design, construction, operations, and maintenance. During project development and design the District DSO insures that all aspects of dam safety are considered and

properly applied. During construction the District DSO insures that the dam is built as designed and that any modifications due to unknown site conditions are properly designed. During operations and maintenance the District DSO insures that the dams are operated in

CECW-EP

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accordance with the project Operations Manual, that the operators are properly trained, that the dams are inspected on a periodic basis, and that, if necessary, the dams are modified to meet current dam safety standards.

7. General Program Guidance: Engineer Pamphlet 1110-2-13, dated 28 June 1996, entitled “Dam Safety Preparedness”, provides necessary background information, a detailed summary of regulations and guidelines, and appropriate references pertaining to the dam safety program at all command levels. This pamphlet was published to assist USACE elements in their preparation for and implementation of the USACE Dam Safety Program.

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